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# Vascular Plants of the Coastal Dunes of Humboldt County, California

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# VASCULAR PLANTS OF THE COASTAL DUNES OF HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Compiled by  
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## F E R N S

**Dennstaedtiaceae — Bracken Fern Family**  
*Pteridium aquilinum* var. *pubescens* • Bracken fern

**Ophioglossaceae — Adder's-tongue Family**  
*Botrychium multifidum* • Leathery grape fern

**Polypodiaceae — Polypody Family**  
*Polypodium californicum* • California polypody  
*Polypodium glycyrrhiza* • Licorice fern  
*Polypodium scolieri* • Coast polypody

**Pteridaceae — Brake Fern Family**  
*Polystichum munitum* • Western sword fern  
*Pentagramma triangularis* • Goldback fern

## C O N I F E R S

**Pinaceae — Pine Family**  
*Abies grandis* • Grand fir  
*Picea sitchensis* • Sitka spruce  
*Pinus contorta* var. *contorta* • Beach pine  
*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *menziesii* • Douglas-fir  
*Tsuga heterophylla* • Western hemlock

## F L O W E R I N G P L A N T S

**Aizoaceae — Ice Plant Family**  
*Carpobrotus aequilaterus* • Sea-fig  
*Carpobrotus edulis* • Hottentot-fig

**Amaranthaceae — Amaranth or Pigweed Family**  
*Chenopodium album* • Lamb's quarters  
*Chenopodium polyspermum* • Many-seeded goosefoot  
*Salicornia depressa* • Glasswort, pickle weed

**Amaryllidaceae — Onion or Amaryllis Family**  
*Allium unifolium* • One-leaved onion

**Anacardiaceae — Cashew Family**  
*Toxicodendron diversilobum* • Poison-oak

**Apocynaceae — Dogbane or Milkweed Family**  
*Vinca major* • Greater periwinkle

**Aquifoliaceae — Holly Family**  
*Ilex aquifolium* • English holly

**Araceae — Aroid or Philodendron Family**  
*Lysichiton americanum* • Skunk-cabbage  
*Zantedeschia aethiopica* • Calla-lily

**Araliaceae — Ginseng Family**  
*Hedera helix* • English ivy

**Asparagaceae — Hyacinth Family**  
*Brodiaea terrestris* ssp. *t.* • Dwarf brodiaea  
*Maianthemum dilatatum* • False lily-of-the-valley

**Betulaceae — Birch Family**  
*Alnus rubra* • Red or Oregon alder

**Boraginaceae — Borage Family**  
*Cryptantha leiocarpa* \* • Coast cryptantha

**Buddlejaceae — Butterfly Bush Family**  
*Buddleja davidii* • Butterfly bush, summer-lilac

**Caprifoliaceae — Honeysuckle Family**  
*Linnaea borealis* ssp. *longiflora* • Twin flower  
*Lonicera involucrata* • Honeysuckle, twinberry

**Caryophyllaceae — Carnation or Pink Family**  
*Cardionema ramosissima* • Sand mat  
*Cerastium glomeratum* • Mouse-ear chickweed  
*Polycarpon tetraphyllum* • Four-leaved allseed

*Sagina decumbens* ssp. *occidentalis* • Pearlwort  
*Silene gallica* • Common catchfly  
*Spergula arvensis* • Corn spurry  
*Stellaria littoralis* • Beach starwort

**Compositae — Sunflower or Aster Family**

*Achillea millefolium* • Common yarrow  
*Agoseris grandiflora* • Big-flowered agoseris  
*Ambrosia chamissonis* • Beach bur  
*Anaphalis margaritacea* • Pearly everlasting  
*Artemisia pycnocephala* • Beach sage  
*Baccharis pilularis* • Dwarf baccharis  
*Bellis perennis* • English daisy  
*Cirsium vulgare* • Bull thistle  
*Cotula australis* • Australian brass buttons  
*Cotula coronopifolia* • Common brass buttons  
*Erigeron glaucus* • Seaside daisy  
*Gnaphalium palustre* • Lowland cudweed  
*Gnaphalium purpureum* • Purple cudweed  
*Gnaphalium stramineum* • Cotton batting plant  
*Hesperevax sparsiflora* • Dwarf cudweed  
*Hieracium albiflorum* • White hawkweed  
*Hypochoeris glabra* • Smooth cat's-ear  
*Hypochoeris radicata* • Hairy cat's-ear  
*Layia carnosa* • Beach layia  
*Leontodon taraxacoides* • Lesser hawkbit  
*Leucanthemum vulgare* • Ox-eye daisy  
*Logfia gallica* • Narrow-leaved cotton-rose  
*Madia sativa* • Chilean tarweed  
*Psilocarphus brevissimus* • Dwarf woolly-heads  
*Senecio elegans* • Purple ragwort  
*Senecio glomeratus* • Australian fireweed  
*Senecio minimus* • Coastal fireweed  
*Senecio vulgaris* • Common groundsel  
*Solidago simplex* • Dune groundsel  
*Soliva sessilis* • Prickly soliva  
*Sonchus oleraceus* • Common sow thistle  
*Symphyotrichum chilense* \* • Pacific-aster  
*Tanacetum bipinnatum* • Dune tansy

**Convolvulaceae — Morning Glory Family**

*Calystegia soldanella* • Beach morning glory

**Crassulaceae — Stonecrop Family**

*Crassula aquatica* • Water pigmy  
*Crassula connata* • Sand pigmy weed

**Cruciferae — Mustard or Crucifer Family**

*Brassica rapa* • Black mustard  
*Cakile edentula* • California sea rocket  
*Cakile maritima* • Sea rocket  
*Cardamine oligosperma* • Few-seeded bitter cress  
*Coincya monensis* • Star mustard  
*Erysimum menziesii* \* • Menzies' wallflower  
*Lepidium nitidum* • Common pepper-grass  
*Lobularia maritima* • Sweet alyssum  
*Raphanus raphanistrum* • Wild radish

**Cyperaceae — Sedge Family**

*Carex obnupta* • Slough sedge  
*Carex pansa* • Sand dune sedge  
*Cyperus eragrostis* • Umbrella sedge  
*Eleocharis microstachya* • Pale spike-rush  
*Schoenoplectus californicus* • California bulrush

**Dipsacaceae — Teasel Family**

*Dipsacus sativus* • Teasel

**Ericaceae — Heath Family**

*Arbutus menziesii* • Madrone  
*Arctostaphylos columbiana* • Manzanita  
*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* • Bear-berry  
*Chimaphila umbellata* ssp. *occidentalis* • Pipsissiwa  
*Gaultheria shallon* • Salal  
*Vaccinium ovatum* • Evergreen huckleberry

**Garryaceae — Silk Tassel Family**

*Garrya elliptica* • Coast silk tassel

**Geraniaceae — Geranium Family**

*Erodium cicutarium* • Red-stemmed filaree  
*Geranium dissectum* • Cut-leaved geranium  
*Geranium molle* • Dove's-foot geranium

**Gramineae — Grass Family**

*Aira caryophylla* • Silver hair grass  
*Aira praecox* • Little hair grass  
*Ammophila arenaria* • European beach grass  
*Anthoxanthum odoratum* • Sweet vernal grass  
*Avena fatua* • Wild oat  
*Briza maxima* • Rattlesnake grass  
*Briza minor* • Small quaking grass  
*Bromus diandrus* • Ripgut brome  
*Bromus hordeaceus* ssp. *hordeaceus* • Soft brome  
*Cortaderia selloana* ssp. *selloana* • Pampas grass  
*Dactylis glomerata* • Orchard grass  
*Deschampsia caespitosa* • Tufted hair grass  
*Elymus mollis* • American dune grass  
*Elymus x vancouverensis* • Vancouver wild rye  
*Festuca arundinacea* • Tall fescue  
*Festuca bromoides* • Six weeks fescue  
*Festuca microstachys* • Annual fescue  
*Festuca perennis* • Perennial rye grass  
*Festuca rubra* • Red fescue  
*Hierochloë occidentalis* • Vanilla grass  
*Holcus lanatus* • Velvet grass  
*Hordeum murinum* var. *leporinum* • Hare barley  
*Poa annua* • Annual blue grass  
*Poa confinis* • Dune blue grass  
*Poa douglasii* • Seashore blue grass  
*Poa macrantha* • Large-flowered sand-dune blue grass  
*Poa pratensis* • Kentucky blue grass  
*Polypogon maritimus* • Maritime beard grass  
*Polypogon monspeliensis* • Annual beard grass

**Grossulariaceae — Gooseberry Family**

*Ribes menziesii* • Canyon gooseberry  
*Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinosum*  
• Pink-flowered currant

**Hydrocotylaceae — Water-Parsnip**

*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* • Water-parsnip

**Juncaceae — Rush Family**

*Juncus bufonius* var. *bufonius* • Toad rush  
*Juncus effusus* var. *brunneus* • Bog rush  
*Juncus falcatus* • Falcate rush  
*Juncus lescurii* • Salt rush  
*Luzula subsessilis* • Wood rush

**Labiatae — Mint Family**

*Lamium purpureum* • Red dead-nettle  
*Prunella vulgaris* • Self-heal  
*Satureja douglasii* • Yerba buena  
*Stachys chamissonis* • Coast hedge-nettle

**Leguminosae — Bean, Pea or Legume Family**

*Cytisus monspessulanus* • French broom  
*Cytisus scoparius* • Scotch broom  
*Lathyrus littoralis* • Beach pea  
*Lathyrus palustris* var. *palustris* • Marsh pea  
*Lotus micranthus* • Desert deer vetch  
*Lotus unifolius* var. *unifolius*  
• American bird's-foot  
*Lupinus arboreus* var. *arboreus* • Bush lupine  
*Lupinus bicolor* • Lindley's annual lupine  
*Lupinus littoralis* • Seashore lupine  
*Medicago polymorpha* • Bur clover  
*Trifolium dubium* • Suckling clover  
*Trifolium macraei* • Chile clover  
*Trifolium microcephalum* • Small-headed clover  
*Trifolium microdon* • Valparaiso clover  
*Trifolium wormskioldii* • Coast clover  
*Vicia hirsuta* • Hairy vetch  
*Vicia sativa* ssp. *nigra* • Narrow-leaved vetch  
*Vicia tetrasperma* • Slender tare

**Lemnaceae — Duckweed Family**

*Lemna minuta* • Least duckweed  
*Lemna valdiviana* • Valdivia duckweed  
*Spirodela polyrrhiza* • Common duckmeat  
*Spirodela punctata* • Dotted duckmeat

**Lythraceae — Loosestrife Family**

*Lythrum hyssopifolia* • Loosestrife

**Montiacaceae — Miner's-Lettuce Family**

*Calandrinia ciliata* • Red maids  
*Claytonia perfoliata* • Miner's-lettuce  
*Claytonia exigua* • Spring beauty

**Myricaceae — Sweet Gale Family**

*Myrica californica* • California wax myrtle

**Nyctaginaceae — Four O'clock Family**

*Abronia latifolia* • Coastal sand-verbena  
*Abronia umbellata* ssp. *breviflora* • Sand-verbena

**Onagraceae — Evening-Primrose Family**

*Camissonia cheiranthifolia* • Dune sun-cups  
*Camissonia strigulosa* • Sandy soil sun-cups  
*Chamerion angustifolium* • Fire weed  
*Clarkia davyi* • Davy's clarkia  
*Epilobium ciliatum* • Fringed willow herb

**Orchidaceae — Orchid Family**

*Calypso bulbosa* • Calypso orchid  
*Goodyera oblongifolia* • Rattlesnake plantain  
*Neottia banksiana* • Northwestern twayblade  
*Piperia elegans* • Elegant piperia  
*Piperia transversa* • Royal rein orchid  
*Spiranthes romanzoffiana* • Hooded ladies'-tresses

**Papaveraceae — Poppy Family**

*Eschscholzia californica* • California-poppy  
*Platystemon californicus* • Cream cups

**Pittosporaceae — Parchment Bark Family**

*Pittosporum tenuifolium* • Tawhiwhi

**Plantaginaceae — Plantago or Plantain Family**

*Plantago erecta* • Dwarf plantain  
*Plantago lanceolata* • English plantain

**Plumbaginaceae — Leadwort or Thrift Family**

*Armeria maritima* ssp. *californica* • Sea thrift

**Polemoniaceae — Phlox Family**

*Gilia millefoliata* • Many-leaved gilia  
*Navarretia squarrosa* • Skunkweed

**Polygonaceae — Knotweed or Smartweed Family**

*Eriogonum latifolium* • Coast buckwheat  
*Polygonum paronychia* • Beach knotweed  
*Rumex acetosella* ssp. *acetosella* • Sheep sorrel  
*Rumex salicifolius* var. *crassus* • Willow dock  
*Rumex crispus* • Curly dock

**Primulaceae — Primrose Family**

*Anagallis arvensis* • Scarlet pimpernel

**Ranunculaceae — Buttercup Family**

*Myosurus minimus* • Tiny mousetail  
*Ranunculus muricatus* • Spiny-fruited buttercup  
*Ranunculus repens* • Low buttercup

**Rhamnaceae — Buckthorn Family**

*Frangula purshiana* • Cascara

**Rosaceae — Rose Family**

*Aphanes occidentalis* • Lady's mantle

*Fragaria chiloensis* • Beach strawberry  
*Malus fusca* • Oregon crab apple  
*Malus sylvestris* • European crab apple  
*Potentilla anserina* ssp. *pacifica* • Pacific silverweed  
*Rubus discolor* • Himalaya berry  
*Rubus parviflorus* • Thimble berry  
*Rubus spectabilis* • Salmon berry  
*Rubus ursinus* • California blackberry  
*Spiraea douglasii* ssp. *douglasii* • Douglas' spirea

#### **Rubiaceae — Madder Family**

*Galium aparine* • Bedstraw, sticky willy  
*Galium triflorum* • Fragrant bedstraw

#### **Salicaceae — Willow**

*Salix hookeriana* • Coastal willow  
*Salix lasiolepis* • Arroyo willow  
*Salix lucida* ssp. *lasiandra* • Pacific willow

#### **Scrophulariaceae — Scroph or Snapdragon Family**

*Castilleja affinis* ssp. *littoralis* • Coast paintbrush  
*Castilleja attenuata* • Narrow-leaved owl's-clover  
*Castilleja exserta* ssp. *exserta* • Common owl's-clover  
*Linaria canadensis* \* • Blue toadflax  
*Mimulus aurantiacus* var. *aurantiacus*  
     • orange bush monkey monkey flower  
*Parentucellia viscosa* • Yellow weed  
*Scrophularia californica* ssp. *c.* • California bee plant  
*Triphysaria eriantha* ssp. *rosea* • Butter-and-eggs  
*Triphysaria pusilla* • Dwarf owl's-clover  
*Veronica peregrina* ssp. *xalapensis* • Speedwell  
*Veronica scutellata* • Marsh speedwell

#### **Solanaceae — Potato or Nightshade Family**

*Solanum aviculare* • New Zealand nightshade

#### **Umbelliferae — Umbel or Carrot Family**

*Anthriscus caucalis* • Bur-chervil  
*Daucus pusillus* • Wild carrot  
*Glehnia littoralis* ssp. *leiocarpa* • Beach silvertop  
*Oenanthe sarmentosa* • Water dropwort  
*Sanicula arctopoides* • Footsteps-of-spring  
*Sanicula crassicaulis* • Pacific sanicle

#### **Urticaceae — Nettle Family**

*Urtica dioica* ssp. *gracilis* • American stinging nettle

#### **Valerianaceae — Valerian Family**

*Plectritis congesta* ssp. *congesta* • Pink plectritis

This edition incorporates plants suggested by John O. Sawyer, Jr., Sue Sweet Van Hook, and several listed by Janeway (1985).

\*This plant is rare at these sites. Please do not take specimens.

### **SOURCES**

Barker, L. M. 1976. A vascular plant inventory and vegetation map of the Lanphere-Christensen Dunes. The Nature Conservancy, National Science Foundation, and Humboldt State University Foundation. 10 pp. + map.

Janeway, L. P. 1985. List of vascular plants of the North Spit, Samoa Peninsula. [7 pp.]

LaBanca, T. 1993. Species list for Clam Beach coastal dunes. In, Vegetation changes at coastal dunes between Mad River and Little River, Humboldt County, California. M. A. thesis. Humboldt State University. Arcata, CA. Pp. 48-54.

Parker, J. 1974. Species list. In, Coastal dune systems between Mad River and Little River[,] Humboldt County, California. M. A. thesis. Humboldt State College. Arcata, CA. Pp. 63-67.

### **NOTES**

The focus of this checklist is the plants found at Clam Beach, Luffenholtz Beach, the McKinleyville Dunes, on the Samoa Peninsula and the Lanphere-Christensen Dunes. While many of the plants are typical of this habitat, others are more wide ranging.